

Achieving age-related expectations in Year 4 - Writing

Fluency – Clarity – Accuracy – Coherence

The Aims of the Primary English Programme of Study

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

Non-Statutory Guidance

Spoken Language

These statements apply to all years. The content should be taught at a level appropriate to the age of the pupils. Pupils should build on the oral language skills that have been taught in preceding years. Pupils should be taught to develop their competence in spoken language and listening to enhance the effectiveness with which they are able to communicate across a range of contexts and to a range of audiences. They should therefore have opportunities to work in groups of different sizes – in pairs, small groups, large groups and as a whole class. Pupils should understand how to take turns and when and how to participate constructively in conversations and debates. Attention should also be paid to increasing pupils' vocabulary, ranging from describing their immediate world and feelings to developing a broader, deeper and richer vocabulary to discuss abstract concepts and a wider range of topics, and to enhancing their knowledge about language as a whole. Pupils should receive constructive feedback on their spoken language and listening, not only to improve their knowledge and skills but also to establish secure foundations for effective spoken language in their studies at primary school, helping them to achieve in secondary education and beyond.

Word Reading

At this stage, teaching comprehension should be taking precedence over teaching word reading directly. Any focus on word reading should support the development of vocabulary. When pupils are taught to read longer words, they should be supported to test out different pronunciations. They will attempt to match what they decode to words they may have already heard but may not have seen in print [for example, in reading 'technical', the pronunciation /tɛtʃnɪkəl/ ('tetchnical') might not sound familiar, but /tɛknɪkəl/ ('teknical') should].

Comprehension

The focus should continue to be on pupils' comprehension as a primary element in reading. The knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to comprehend are very similar at different ages. This is why the programmes of study for comprehension in years 3 and 4 and years 5 and 6 are similar: the complexity of the writing increases the level of challenge. Pupils should be taught to recognise themes in what they read, such as the triumph of good over evil or the use of magical devices in fairy stories and folk tales. They should also learn the conventions of different types of writing (for example, the greeting in letters, a diary written in the first person or the use of presentational devices such as numbering and headings in instructions). Pupils should be taught to use the skills they have learnt earlier and continue to apply these skills to read for different reasons, including for pleasure, or to find out information and the meaning of new words. Pupils should continue to have opportunities to listen frequently to stories, poems, non-fiction and other writing, including whole books and not just extracts, so that they build on what was taught previously. In this way, they also meet books and authors that they might not choose themselves. Pupils should also have opportunities to exercise choice in selecting books and be taught how to do so, with teachers making use of any library services and expertise to support this. Reading, re-reading, and rehearsing poems and plays for presentation and performance give pupils opportunities to discuss language, including vocabulary, extending their interest in the meaning and origin of words. Pupils should be encouraged to use drama approaches to understand how to perform plays and poems to support their understanding of the meaning. These activities also provide them with an incentive to find out what expression is required, so feeding into comprehension. In using non-fiction, pupils should know what information they need to look for before they begin and be clear about the task. They should be shown how to use contents pages and indexes to locate information. Pupils should have guidance about the kinds of explanations and questions that are expected from them. They should help to develop, agree on, and evaluate rules for effective discussion. The expectation should be that all pupils take part.

Spelling

Pupils should learn to spell new words correctly and have plenty of practice in spelling them. As in years 1 and 2, pupils should continue to be supported in understanding and applying the concepts of word structure (see English Appendix 2). Pupils need sufficient knowledge of spelling in order to use dictionaries efficiently.

Handwriting

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

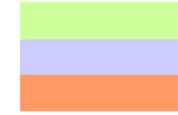
Composition

Pupils should continue to have opportunities to write for a range of real purposes and audiences as part of their work across the curriculum. These purposes and audiences should underpin the decisions about the form the writing should take, such as a narrative, an explanation or a description. Pupils should understand, through being shown these, the skills and processes that are essential for writing: that is, thinking aloud to explore and collect ideas, drafting, and re-reading to check their meaning is clear, including doing so as the writing develops. Pupils should be taught to monitor whether their own writing makes sense in the same way that they monitor their reading, checking at different levels.

Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar should be taught explicitly: pupils should be taught the terminology and concepts set out in English Appendix 2, and be able to apply them correctly to examples of real language, such as their own writing or books that they have read. At this stage, pupils should start to learn about some of the differences between Standard English and non-Standard English and begin to apply what they have learnt [for example, in writing dialogue for characters].

Year 4	WRITING					
	Transcription	Handwriting	Composition Composition and Effect	Composition Text Structure and Organisation	Composition Sentence Structure	Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation
Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use further prefixes and suffixes and understand how to add them (English Appendix 1) Spell further homophones Spell words that are often misspelt (English Appendix 1) Place the possessive apostrophe accurately in words with regular plurals e.g. boys', girls' and in words with irregular plurals e.g. children's Use the first two or three letters of a word to check its spelling in a dictionary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined Is able to maintain fluency of writing and has sufficient stamina for typical written tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss writing similar to that which they are planning to write in order to understand and learn from its structure, vocabulary and grammar Plan their writing by discussing and recording ideas Evaluate and edit by assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing and suggesting improvements In narratives, creates settings, characters and plot Writing is clear in purpose Use a varied and rich vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-narrative material uses simple organisational devices Organise paragraphs around a theme Choose nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition Use conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause for cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compose and rehearse sentences orally (including dialogue) Use an increasing range of sentence length and structure Extend the range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including when, if, because, although 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech e.g. a comma after the reporting clause; end punctuation within inverted commas: <i>The conductor shouted, "Sit down!"</i> Noun phrases expanded by the addition of modifying adjectives, nouns and preposition phrases e.g. <i>the strict maths teacher with curly hair</i> Understand the difference between plural and possessive -s Proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors Propose changes to grammar and vocabulary to improve consistency, including the accurate use of pronouns in sentences
Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plural nouns of words ending in 'o'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can correctly join letters in accordance with the school's agreed style Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description or detail in both narrative and non-narrative is expanded through an appropriate and precise range of vocabulary Viewpoint is consistently maintained (for example, word choice indicates child's viewpoint on a character or an issue) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Openings and closings are clearly signalled and well developed Produce internally coherent paragraphs in logical sequence e.g. using topic sentences with main ideas supported by subsequent sentences 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard English forms for verb inflections instead of local spoken forms Use fronted adverbials followed by a comma Use the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to the past tense Indicate possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns
Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write from memory simple sentences, dictated by the teacher, that include words and punctuation taught so far 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use figurative language such as similes, alliteration to build a picture in the readers head 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use and understand the grammatical terminology in English Appendix 2 accurately and appropriately when discussing their writing and reading: <i>determiner, pronoun, possessive pronoun, adverbial</i>



Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3

Black text

Bold/italics

National Curriculum statements

National Curriculum statements (NAHT KPI)